CLAIMS:

1. A probe for sensing the position of an object on positioning apparatus, comprising:

a first electric circuit responsive to the probe attaining a sensing relationship with the object;

a power supply for energising said first circuit;

a sensor responsive to movement of the probe and arranged to cause the power supply to be connected to said first electric circuit when movement is detected;

characterised in that a movement-discriminating circuit is connected to said sensor, the movement-discriminating circuit discriminating a movement indicating that the probe is to be used from other movements.

2. A probe according to claim 1, wherein the sensor is an acceleration sensor mounted to be responsive to a rotation of the probe indicating that it is to be used.

3. A probe according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the movement-discriminating circuit discriminates rotation of the probe from linear accelerations, connecting the power supply to the first electric circuit when rotation is detected.

4. A probe according to claim 3, wherein the movement-discriminating circuit detects whether a signal indicating rotation is received from the sensor over a period or periods of time corresponding to only a part or parts of a full revolution of the probe.

5. A probe according to claim 1, wherein the movement-discriminating circuit is responsive to

receipt of a signal corresponding to a predetermined signature relating to movement of the probe or to vibration during such movement.

6. A probe according to claim 5, wherein the predetermined signature signal corresponds to rotation of the probe.

7. A probe according to claim 5, wherein the predetermined signature signal corresponds to a predetermined sequence of movements of the probe or of vibrations of the probe while it is moved.

8. A probe for sensing the position of an object on positioning apparatus, comprising:

a first electric circuit responsive to the probe attaining a sensing relationship with the object;

a power supply for energising said circuit;

a sensor responsive to movement of the probe and arranged to cause the power supply to be connected to said circuit when movement is detected;

characterised in that said sensor is responsive to linear acceleration.

9. A probe according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sensor is a switch.

10. A probe according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sensor is also arranged to disconnect the power supply from said first electric circuit when a further movement of the probe is detected.

11. A probe according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein a timer is provided which disconnects the power supply from said first electric circuit a predetermined period after it was connected, or after a predetermined period of non-use of the probe.

12. A probe according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the power supply is a battery.